



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, October 26, 2016

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INTERNATIONAL

National Intelligence Director pessimistic about DPRK denuclearization

[Kyodo](#) reported on remarks made on Tuesday in New York by Director of National Intelligence Clapper, who said it's a "lost cause" to try to get North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons because nuclear arsenals are its "ticket to survival." Pointing out that this view runs counter to the Obama administration's official policy, the article said the top U.S. intelligence official suggested that it is more realistic for Washington to adopt a new approach of attempting to limit Pyongyang's nuclear capabilities. DOS Spokesman Kirby emphasized the same day that there is no change in Washington's policy of seeking the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. NHK aired a similar report today, saying that Clapper's remarks are expected to arouse controversy.

- [Japan not to support U.N. resolution urging nuclear weapons ban](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Russian ministry says economic cooperation with Japan to total 1.7 trillion yen](#) (Mainichi)
- [Russia releases Japanese fishing boat seized in Sept.](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

Senior LDP, Komeito members talk about TPP

NHK reported at noon that the secretaries general and Diet affairs chiefs of the LDP and Komeito Party met this morning and agreed to decide on the timing of voting on the TPP and related bills after assessing the situation of Diet deliberations at the Lower House special committee and the moves of the Democratic Party until the last minute. According to the network, a senior LDP member

told reporters that the ruling parties are still hoping to put the bills to a vote sometime this month, but will not do it in a high-handed manner.

World Bank downgrades Japan in terms of ease of doing business

Nikkei wrote online that the World Bank released this year's Doing Business Report that measures the "ease of doing business" in 190 nations and regions around the world, noting that Japan slipped from 32nd to 34th place because the Japanese market is deemed unfriendly to entrepreneurs. The World Bank also viewed Japan critically in terms of tax payment, construction permits, and getting credit. Noting that the Abe administration is aiming to raise Japan to third place in the report by 2020, the daily underscored that the latest results demonstrate the need to further expedite structural and regulatory reforms to offer a better business environment.

- **Lower House special committee to hold TPP Q&A session on Oct. 27** (Mainichi)

Financial Services Agency commissioner expected to become next vice minister of finance (Shukan Ekonomisuto)

Japan adding paths to let in foreign care workers (Nikkei Asian Review)

- **Editorial: Intake of foreigners contradicts goal of better compensation for care workers** (Sankei)

- **Gov't mulls 2020 start for decommissioning of troubled Monju reactor** (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- **Prime minister's schedule on October 25** (Nikkei)
- **Asao, Hatoyama join LDP parliamentary group** (Asahi)
- **Interview with former justice minister: LDP and police officials eager to enact anti-conspiracy law** (Tokyo Shimbun)

SECURITY

Gov't to ban pointing of lasers at aircraft (Sankei)

- **Gov't mistakenly overpaid tax compensation to municipalities by 116 million** (Okinawa Times)

SCIENCE

- [Paris Agreement approval bill to clear Upper House on Oct. 28](#) (Mainichi)
- [Paris Accord should spur Japanese interest in green bonds](#) (Nikkei)
- [Using IT, Uber can fulfill unmet transportation needs in Japan](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Uber's lack of responsibility for accidents is problematic](#) (Yomiuri)

SOCIETY

- [Japan ranks 111th in gender equality](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Feature: Japanese women "being the change" they wish to see](#) (Kyodo News)

OPINION POLLS

- [Jiji Press public opinion poll on newspapers](#) (Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll Bulletin)

TV PROGRAMS

Shogi player Satoshi Murayama

NHK's "Close-up Gendai" on Tuesday reported on the late Satoshi Murayama, a professional shogi player who died at the age of 29 in 1998. The program reported on revived interest in Murayama, who devoted his life to shogi while suffering from kidney disease since he was five. Knowing that he might not live long, Murayama poured all his energy into shogi while hiding his illness from others. Books and comics about Murayama are bestsellers and a film about him and his rival Yoshiharu Habu will soon be released.

